

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 8, 9, 11-14, 17, and 18 are presented for further examination. Claims 1, 9, 11-14, 17, and 18 have been amended. Claims 6, 7, 10, 15, 16, and 19 have been canceled.

In the Office Action mailed March 19, 2004, the Examiner objected to the specification and claims because of informalities on pages 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 13, and 17, and in claims 1, 9, and 10. Applicants have amended the specification and claims to overcome the informalities and adopt the changes recommended by the Examiner. No new matter has been added. Withdrawal of the objections and rejections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 4, and 8 were rejected as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,272,168 ("Lomp et al.") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,275,484 ("Lynch et al."). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lomp et al. in view of Lynch et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,078,611 ("La Rosa et al."). Claim 5 was rejected as obvious over Lomp et al. in view of Lynch et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,639,906 ("Levin"). Claim 6 was rejected as obvious over Lomp et al. in view of Lynch et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,333,934 ("Miura"). Claims 9, 10, 12-14, and 17 were rejected as obvious over Levin in view of Lomp et al. Claim 15 was rejected as obvious over Lomp et al. in view of Lynch et al. and Miura. Claim 11 was rejected as obvious over Lomp et al. in view of Lynch et al. and further in view of La Rosa et al. Claim 18 was rejected as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,668,011 ("Li et al.") in view of Miura. Claims 7, 16, and 19 were objected to, but found to be allowable if rewritten into independent form.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the recitation of allowable claim 7 and intervening claim 6. Hence, claim 1 is now allowable claim 7 rewritten into independent form to include the limitations of intervening claim 6. In view of the allowability of claim 7, applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance, as are dependent claims 2-5 and 8.

Independent claim 9 has been rewritten to include the limitations of allowable claim 16 and intervening dependent claims 10 and 15. Inasmuch as claim 9 is now allowable claim 16 rewritten into independent form to include the limitations of intervening claims 10 and

15, applicants submit that independent claim 9 and dependent claims 11-13 and 17 are now in condition for allowance.


Independent claim 18 has been rewritten to include the limitations of allowable claim 19. Inasmuch as claim 19 was found to be allowable, applicants respectfully submit that claim 18 is now in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims remaining in this application are not clearly in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner finds minor informalities that can be resolved by telephone conference, the Examiner is urged to contact applicants' undersigned representative by telephone at (206) 622-4900 in order to expeditiously resolve prosecution of this application.

Consequently, early and favorable action allowing these claims and passing this case to issuance is respectfully solicited.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

Respectfully submitted,
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